

# THE STUDENT WORLD

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## Editorial

THE symposium in this issue of *The Student World* reflects as possibly nothing else could so well do, the currents of thought and feeling which are to-day running through the minds and hearts of students. The articles stimulate the desire to have similar side-lights thrown upon the literature which is likewise most influencing the students in many other countries such as Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Australasia, China, and Latin America. It is evident that among the students of every land the effects of the War may be seen in the books which are occupying the time and attention of under-graduates. Happily the depression and re-action following the great upheaval have given way largely to a revival of energy and hope with a resultant spread of the spirit of enquiry and a desire and determination to get at reality. It is true, as more than one writer points out, that much of the reading of students is related to their prescribed courses of study and to the emergencies and special responsibilities thrust upon them by their economic necessities and other governing circumstances. Moreover, to-day as ever, the students of all lands and races turn by irresistible attraction to fiction and other imaginative literature; and to-day as never before, to the ephemeral periodical literature which bulks so large in the life of the times. At the same time the impression conveyed by the various writers, which is strongly confirmed by the reports of book shops in the Orient and in the Occident, is one of a growing interest in the more serious side of life and,

therefore, in writings bearing on religious, ethical, and social subjects.

Any attempt to classify the reading of young men and women in the colleges and universities would reveal the following among the principal headings. Under a wide range of topics, both in book and magazine literature read by students, are subjects dealing with the sources of authority. There is gratifying proof that students are seeking to re-examine the foundations of belief and to re-assess values. Not only the literature of the new youth movements on every Continent, but also other writings which tell of a real renaissance, command the eager attention of students. Relatively the idealistic writers would seem to have greater influence with liberty-loving students than do those of materialistic bent or emphasis. Of course there are alarming exceptions as in the case of certain aspects of the communistic youth movements of Russia and other lands. Two other subjects now engrossing the thought of students the world over, as at no time in the past, are first, those dealing with social problems and social service, and secondly, those bearing upon international questions, notably the subject of war. There is nothing short of a social revival, the result of the quickening of the social conscience, in centres of learning far and wide. Moreover, it is not surprising that there should be such a profound interest in all questions bearing on the establishment of a better international order. In fact, it is more than interest: any one at all intimately acquainted with what is going on in the minds of the present generation knows that there is a fixed determination to discover and to follow a better way.

It is indeed re-assuring that works of religion hold such a large place in the reading, the investigation, and the discussion of students. Taking the student world as a whole, we may say that the New Testament still holds its place as the best seller in the realm of religious literature. It is interesting to note that among other writings bearing on religious subjects those which have been most widely translated and circulated in student circles are the books of Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Professor T. R. Glover, Dr. Herbert Gray, Professor Rauschenbusch, and Professor William James; likewise, Papini's *Life of Christ*, Kagawa's story of his own experiences in work among the depressed classes, and the



writings of Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Tagore, and Mahatma Gandhi. Such a list does not take account of certain other writers who, within the sphere of their own country or within the limits of their native language, may have exerted a far wider and deeper influence.

It should afford the readers of *The Student World* sincere satisfaction and stimulate them to greater activity to be reminded that undoubtedly the principal factor in bringing about the greatly enlarged interest among students in religious literature has been the activity of the various Christian organizations of students united in the World's Student Christian Federation. When we examine what is being accomplished by the publication departments of certain of the Movements in both Western and Oriental countries, or through the initiative and well directed efforts of individual travelling secretaries, lecturers, and missionaries, we recognize how practicable and important it is that the leaders of every national and local Christian student society should take this subject more fully into their plans and policies.

Between the lines of the symposium one may read much showing the great pacifying and unifying influence of the international circulation of much of the best literature produced and promoted by the members of our various Movements. It is a most striking fact that there should recently have come from the press, and within a few days of one another, the three most notable books dealing with the grave racial problem of modern times, each written by a former leader of a Student Movement—"Of One Blood" by Dr. Robert E. Speer, "Christianity and the Race Problem" by J. H. Oldham, and "The Negro from Africa to America" by W. D. Weatherford.

# What Are Russian Students Reading?

By V. F. MARTSINKOVSKY

*(Translated from the Russian by Donald A. Lowrie)*

DURING the whole of the great Russian Revolution, up to 1923, I came into touch many times with great student audiences, as I lectured on topics of ethics and religion in the universities of Moscow and other cities. Personal correspondence and talks with students have given still more concrete material as to the themes which are pre-occupying the Russian student.

## **The Influence of the Present Moment**

Let us begin by noting how the present moment is reflected in the student's choice of books. The collapse of all the old systems, social, political, and economic, moves him to seek out books which will explain the causes of revolution, and centres his attention on social and economic questions: labour and capital, production and consumption, industry and agriculture, the labour- and the peasant-question. The necessity of understanding the ideology of economic materialism and the bases of Marxism forces him to turn to the original works of Marx, Engels, Lasalle, or at least to some popular version of their basic ideas. Others seek the solution of problems of property and power in the authors of Anarchism: Bakunin, Kropotkin, Stirner. "The Alphabet of Communism," by Bucharin is one of the most popular books of this type. Whether or no you sympathize with the new ideas, you have to know them in order to orientate yourself socially and morally, and this involuntarily broadens and deepens your own view, and makes you test the basis of your own ethics and religion.

## **Anti-Religious Literature**

The new ideology extends to a criticism of the bases of the old ideology, its ethics and religion. The conception is constantly increasing of the importance of religion as a first source of values, of motives, aims, and actions. Present-day literature touches the question of religion not only in the sphere of social relations but also from the view-point of the education of the coming generation. There is a constantly growing consciousness of the neces-



sity of combating religion, which is looked upon as "opium for the people," distracting them from real and material problems: hence anti-religious propaganda is rapidly being developed and given a theoretical basis.

Journals of this nature are published: *The Atheist, Revolution and the Church*, criticizing chiefly the failings of the clergy and the church organization of the former State Church but not omitting at the same time sharp attacks on the so-called "Free" or "Evangelical" Churches.

The book "The God Jesus" by the Polish author, Nemoyevski, is widely circulated. This book brings out the idea that Jesus never existed, but is really a myth repeating many of the myths of the astral cycle, such as those of the gods Osiris, Anubis, and Dionysius. This same purpose of destroying belief in Jesus, not merely as the divine Saviour but also as an historic person, is served by the book of Professor Drews (professor of Philosophy in the Polytechnic at Karlsruhe), "The Christ Myth," translated from the German.

Dostoyevsky is not alone in his conviction that "the ideal of the Russian people is Christ": this faith forms the fundamental current of inspiration of Russian literature—as a whole it might well be called the book about Christ, beginning with Pushkin, and through to Mereshkovsky. This faith has created a rich folk-literature: poetry, legends, stories, and religious verse; this faith, consciously or not, lives in the soul of almost every Russian student. Therefore, reading anti-Christian literature, he is forced to prove and strengthen his beliefs, but as Pushkin says: "The heavy hammer, though it shatters glass, welds steel." There are many, particularly those who have believed only by tradition, whose faith instead of becoming firmer under the pressure of revolution, is shattered like glass.

Altruistic propaganda passes gradually from polemics into an apologetic of its own theory as a religion. Atheism is preached as a new religion which has even its sources of inspiration, of enthusiasm. "Religion is enthusiasm, and without enthusiasm nothing great was ever founded," writes Lunacharsky in his book "Religion and Social Sin." The religion of atheism builds its own shrines and even a cult of its own. In 1923 there appeared a Russian edition of the book "Communism and Christianity" by

the American, William M. Brown, in which the author proposes the worship of Labour, even prayers to it. This book is known among students. One recalls Dostoyevsky's thought that man, turning away from God, thereby declares himself God. The "God become man" of the Gospels is replaced by the "man become God" of atheism.

The percentage of anti-religious books issued increases every year, as is shown by the following figures, taken from the "Soviet Books" exhibit in Prague in March, 1924.

Year	Total books published	Philosophy		Religion	
		No. of titles	Per cent.	No. of titles	Per cent.
1921	4130	22	0.53	14	0.34
1922	9342	76	0.81	68	0.73
1923	9000	79	0.88	136	1.51

It is not entirely the books he wants that influence a student, but those it is possible for him to get. Sometimes, whether you will or no, you have to "eat what is put before you," and the book-market is regulated under the influence of the prevailing agitation of ideals. The issue and importation of books is controlled by government censor; libraries and reading-rooms are supplied with works of a materialistic and atheistic character, while there is a strong tendency to remove from libraries any books of specially religious content.

### Artistic Literature

But there is one great class of books which has remained untouched by the new ideas and at the same time is most desirable for Russian students: this is the national literature with all its wealth of Russian genius. The language of art, of beauty, at the same time expressing the high ideals of moral perfection, of fraternity, of universal brotherhood, conquers men even of the most contrasting ideals. That was no vain word of Dostoyevsky's: "Beauty will save the world." The language of art holds the secret of pacifying, of unifying; it is supreme and universal as the sky, spreading its modest blue over our world of hatreds.

The government press has issued (1923) new editions of Pushkin, Griboyedov, Ostrovsky, Goncharov, Turgenieff, L. Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, and other classics, including foreign writers (Shakespeare). In *belles-lettres* the student finds a corrective against the one-sidedness of modern influences and teachings. Dissatis-



fied with the dry and monotonous rationalism, the soul eagerly absorbs the mystical vision of Dostoyevsky in "The Brothers Karamazoff." A re-action from materialism draws to the "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina" of Tolstoy, to the idealism of Wilde and the romance of Maeterlinck. Personality, scorned by mechanical collectivism, seeks an echo of its own individuality in the poetry of Lermontov, Andreyev, Gorky, or Ibsen—seeks in their preaching to find a man of power. Cosmopolitanism, in so far as it forgets the native or national, sharpens the desire for return to self, to the spirit of one's own people; hence the attention paid to such writers as Leskoff ("Members of the Council," "The Righteous," etc.). And after all the soul simply wearies of the tumult of revolution, and longs to drink in the divine sound of "pure art" in the lyrics of Pushkin, Fet, Blok, and Balmont, and the mysticism of Tagore. On the other hand, authors inspired with energetic idealism, such as Ibsen, impart the creative impulse to the wearied soul. Thanks to poetry the student can not only escape from every-day life, but is also helped to understand the present moment and get an æsthetic comprehension of it. This is particularly true of works which reflect historic periods similar to that which Russia is living through to-day, such works as Hugo's "Quatrevingt-treize," "L'Année terrible," "Les misérables," Zola's "Coal-miners," Mérimée's "La Jacquerie," Mirbeau's "Les Mauvais Bergers," Hamsun's "Growth of the Soil." These all were reprinted in Russia during 1923.

Some of the so-called "followers of the revolution" also attract interest: Mayakovsky, who has put into verse the beat of factories and the rattle of machine-guns; Klueff, with his peasant poetry colourful and sometimes reaching mystical depths; Gorodetsky, Oreshin, Esenin, and other representatives of the new tendencies of decadence, futurism, and constructivism. The poem of Blok, "The Twelve," which depicts with surprising lifelikeness all the elements of the Russian revolution in the characters of twelve "Red" soldiers, occupies first place among all reflections of the overturn. But as an explanation of it all, Mereshkovsky in his trilogy "Christ and Anti-Christ" and his religious-philosophic articles gives much more, although they were written earlier. Greater and deeper than them all, however, in the explanation of the spirit of the revolution is Dostoyevsky, whom Mereshkovsky

rightly considers the "prophet of the Russian Revolution," especially in his masterly novel "The Possessed." It is noteworthy, too, that in the theatre (Moscow Art Theatre and others) plays by modern authors on themes dealing with the life of the day do not last long and are thrust into the background by old classic dramas like Pushkin's "Boris Godunoff," A. Tolstoy's "Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich," Goethe's "Faust," Shakespeare's "Hamlet," the works of Ostrovsky, the dramatized novels of Dostoyevsky, Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird," and others.

### Philosophic and Moral Tendencies

Philosophic movements and tendencies which have produced books that are influencing students, especially in the realms of ethics and religion, include, beside atheism and materialism, the teachings of Christianity, the works of Tolstoy, theosophy, and "anthroposophy."

Foremost of all the utterances of Christianity comes the New Testament, of course, which is increasingly attracting interest. Next in order come certain philosophers dear to the Russian heart, such as V. Soloviev ("The Justification of Right," "The Spiritual Basis of Life," "Three Conversations"); S. N. Troubetskoy ("The Teaching about the Logos"); S. N. Bulgakoff ("Two Cities"); P. Florensky ("The Pillar and Confirmation of the Truth"). Besides these, certain popular works in translation must be mentioned: Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" and "The Ideal Life," James's "The Varieties of Religious Experience," Pascal's "Thoughts on Religion," Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero-Worship," and Arthur H. Tabrum's "Religious Beliefs of Scientists." Books on questions of practical ethics like "The Education of the Will" by Payot are also popular. There is great interest in questions of sex-ethics (Weiniger's "Sex and Character"; Forel's "Sex-Ethics"), but there is a serious lack of good practical and morally sound books of this nature. The influence of Tolstoy is felt in many questions of personal morals as well as in the negative attitude toward civilization, war, etc. ("The Kingdom of God is Within You," "My Faith," etc.)

### The New Student-Body

Of course these books are more popular among the older stu-



dents, while the new, "Red" students feed on literature of a materialistic tendency. But there is no doubt that in time the new students, too, will feel a spiritual hunger, and will thirst for a word of idealism, for the human soul is cramped in materialism; as the philosopher Skovorodov says: "It is hard for an eagle to fly in a cage." And finally there rises in them a protest against all the negative theories simply because these are thrust upon them officially and compulsorily. On the other hand, religious ideology although unacceptable officially, has a far greater influence on freedom-loving students than has atheism, which has now become the official religion. Though the atheistic books that have been mentioned attract interest at first, they fail to arouse conviction, and are easily refuted by students of a more or less consciously held faith.

### The Student Emigrant

The Russian student of the "emigration" often retains the ideology of the old régime in the defense of which he lost his fatherland. This explains his special interest in books dedicated, for instance, to recollections of the revolution and civil war (the novels of Krasnov, the memoirs of Denikin, Sacharov, Witte, Giliard). Nowhere stronger than among emigrés is the love for national and national-religious literature (like Leskov). The loss of home life and separation from their families specially attracts these students to literature giving peaceful pictures of quiet family life (Tolstoy or Dickens). The worn and frayed nerves want "books with a happy ending" and even Dostoyevsky is more respected as an ideal of religion and home, than actually read, since he is classed with the "heavy" authors. The student-emigré has to study so much, furthermore, that he seeks in books recreation rather than stimulus to thinking.

The more active are seeking a new orientation for the intelligentsia, living at present through a re-action against both "groundless idealism" and "wingless materialism." Types of strong religious personality like Mahatma Ghandi attract them. They are interested in religious books, not stereotyped or formal, but really inspired and related to life. Unfortunately there are few such books.

Some philosophers of the emigration are successful, such as

Lossky, Berdiaeff, Frank. The book of the last-mentioned, entitled "Shattered Idols," expresses in the tone of the majority of the emigrés their disillusionment in revolution, politics, culture, and abstract idealism, and sounds a strong challenge to turn to Christ, to the Living God.

### **The Ultimately Victorious Book**

That book will conquer which leads on to a new heaven and a new earth: the gospel of Christ as well as those books which offer a strong, sincere, and vital interpretation of it. These will conquer: they are even now gaining the victory. Their light is shining through the pages of the great literature of Russia and the rest of the world.

And ever more and more the gaze of students turns toward the sun which is the source of all this light, to the Gospels. They have become for many a book of daily guidance for life.

## **What Young Japan Thinks and Reads To-day**

By TAKESHI SAITO

INTROSPECTION and interest in social service seem to be two main factors in the life of the educated young Japanese of the present day. And these traits are reflected in the principal tendencies of contemporary Japanese literature.

### **Introspection and Objective Reality**

First, let us seek to analyze this introspection. It is, I think, born of the effort to reach truth. There are few young Japanese who are not seekers after truth, even though they may make but the slightest intelligent effort. Natural science and naturalistic literature have taught them "to see things as they really are," and in spite of the final defects of this teaching, hatred of falsity and love of truth have been firmly planted in their minds. They have found a great deal of unreality and untruth in the moral ideals, political thoughts, and social systems of their forefathers, and they have naturally begun to doubt themselves, as having been educated by the mistaken precepts of other days. What young Englishmen think of mid-Victorianism is similar to what



young Japanese think of their fathers' ideals. Young men of Japan endeavour to search for the truth about themselves, for they believe the first step towards self-knowledge is the first step of the moral life. Hence their ardent eagerness for introspection.

I regret to see that, because of frequent pride of intellect and resultant scepticism, their power of introspection does not lead to enthusiasm for action. I do not mean to say, however, that their power of introspection contains anything contrary to morality within itself: surely it is more moral and even religious to see one's naked self than to be ignorant of one's ugliness and vanity, and not to wonder at providential incidents in the development of one's soul. There are, or have been, however, not a few modern Japanese writers who, instead of reflecting on themselves for the purpose of bringing their own minds to perfection, mistakenly regard it as true life merely to act in accordance with their inconstant sensations. Still they have delicacy of thinking. They try never to neglect even the slightest shade reflected in a corner of their minds; they are keenly sensitive to what happens to their hearts; they watch themselves calmly with sharp eyes and clear heads. This is, I think, a reason why Walter Pater is highly spoken of among young Japanese intellectuals and Professor Jiro Abé, a man of extremely brilliant mind and probably keener about the practical phase of moral life than the author of "The Renaissance," is much appreciated by students and intelligent readers.

Though their efforts at introspection are quite moral in so far as they try to decide between truth and untruth, some of them seem, in their attempts to discover the reality of self, to fail to pay due attention to the question of good and evil. They attach much more value to "what is" than to "what ought to be." They are too entirely intellectual and too apt to forget the supremacy of moral values. Some men of this sort are apt to become too scientific or naturalistic; others, though seeking after truth, succumb to the "lyrical cry." Perhaps this comes from the fact that their range of vision has been narrowed by their attempts to see themselves, so that they forget to pay as much attention to objective reality as to the subjective. This tendency is clearly seen when one comes across contemporary novels tinted by naturalism and pseudo-religious literary works, which have been

very popular in Japan these several years. Though naturalism has not been favourably received since the rise of certain idealists, still it is represented by such names of established fame as those of Messrs. Toson Shimazaki, Shusei Tokuta, and Hakucho Masamune. The more recent pseudo-religious literary movement, on the other hand, has its champion in Mr. Hyakuzo Kurata, the author of "A Priest and His Disciple" (his most popular drama); and the "Shirakaba" Brotherhood, an humanitarian literary movement, has come into the limelight under the leadership of Messrs. T. Arishima, S. Mushakoji, and N. Shiga, the novelists.

### Introspection and Intellectual Gratification

This type of introspection often leads to what I would style intellectual gratification. As a mathematician is delighted in approaching success in the solution of a difficult problem, so do some young writers enjoy themselves in what may be called self-vivisection. They are always in danger of attaching more importance to what they discern through introspection than to the external or objective world. We are reminded of this phase when we read novels of "disinterestedness"—some of the novels written by the late Mr. Soseki Natsume, one of our greatest writers, and his followers, e.g. Mr. Ryunosuke Akutagawa. I say some of their novels, because they have written others of permanent value.

Next, some æsthetes, i.e. professed appreciators of esoteric beauty, are restricted to the analysis and gratification of their æsthetic instincts. These followers of "art for art's sake" lay too much stress on the formal beauty of literature, and are pleased to find themselves able to give unusual and striking expression to their thoughts and ideas. This æstheticism, which was brought into prominence by some poets in France and England, has influenced certain young writers of Japan since the 'nineties. The dream-like mediævalism of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who was nearly thirty years ago much read by the late Dr. Bin Uyeda and his circle, led them to Dante,\* the poet of "*La Divina Commedia*," and though some younger writers went too far under the

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\*Dante has been much spoken of by intellectuals these ten years or so, and there are three complete translations of "*La Divina Commedia*," one of which, rendered by Mr. H. Yamakawa, is a truly good literary work.



influence of Baudelaire as popularized by Oscar Wilde, intellectuals of to-day have got rid of the dandyism and dilettantism assumed by the decadents.

Lastly, another phase of introspection is the sceptical tendency. The more one goes forward in one's reflections upon oneself, the more ugly or filthy will that self be found; and young Japanese cannot, at this stage of thinking, but suspect the reliability of existing morals, and so they are likely to rush for something new. They do not mind being called rebels against long-established institutions. And their accusers seem to them but cowards. They go on their own way persisting in what others designate wickedness, but what they firmly believe to be the good. They believe absolutely in what they think to be right, no matter what the whole world may say. And what they want to achieve is an expansion of the *I*, a process which may not always be in harmony with the injunctions of morality. Hence a new movement in Japan similar to the Renaissance in Europe, which with complete disregard of many moral defects aimed at the emancipation of human nature, long distorted by mediæval monasticism, and sought the infinite expansion of human capacity in every direction, spiritual and physical. Any one who reads some of Mr. T. Arishima's works will agree with this statement.

### Introspection and Action

While introspection is the first of the steps that together make life significant, it should be remembered that man cannot be satisfied with mere gazing at life. One who is introspective can also be eager for action. Strangely enough, a Hamlet can be a brave "soldier," while a Fortinbras cannot be a Hamlet. So young Japan, introspective and analytical, can at the same time be up and doing some actual good. She wants now to get not only at the depth of subjective reality, but also at the actuality of objective reality. Mr. H. Kurata, one of the most popular contemporary writers in Japan, says, "It is not words, but life itself, that one should aim at. March into a life of the Cross, not a life of enjoyment." It is not only young Englishmen who ask for poems which are "fruit of action, the sweat of a body that has passed through the fire" as was said by Charles H. Sorley, one of the most promising of the young poets killed in

the War. It is the same with young Japan. She now realizes that "the disease of yesterday was sentimentality, and the disease of to-day is cleverness," in the words of Mr. Robert Nichols, the poet and professor of English Literature in the Imperial University, Tokyo.

"Our eyes should see no other sense  
Than this, eternally to DO,"

they cry with Sorley. Yes, some of the young intelligentsia in Japan, who want "eternally to DO," are deeply interested in social service and social problems. Thus the publications which have recently commanded the best sale are narratives of actual life devoted to social service or social problems—for example, "A Life of Repentance," which is a confession of Mr. Tenko Nishida, a man who is neither Christian nor Buddhist, but in a sense religious, and "Beyond the Death-Line," which is a narrative of actual experiences of Mr. Toyohiko Kagawa, a very enthusiastic Christian socialist, who has lived in a slum many years. These and other works are from the pens of writers who were hitherto utterly unknown to the majority of the reading public and little known in the literary circle. But they are now best sellers in Japan. Moreover, books concerning the "New Village" Movement under the leadership of Mr. Saneatsu Mushakoji—a movement influenced by Tolstoy, and some communists, which reminds me of Coleridge's pantisocracy, an endeavour to create a new world where equality, fraternity, and work for one another are universally realized—these books are popular too.

This indicates the influence of a sort of socialism in the present-day literature in Japan. Some socialist critics and novelists insist on "proletariat" literature and cry that problems of labour and property should be treated in literature instead of the life of the middle class which has been a predominating subject of late. Mr. T. Arishima, one of the most noted contemporary novelists, gave up to the poor his hereditary estates valued at nearly fifty thousand pounds in order to lead the remainder of his life merely as a writer. These facts are evidence of the awakening consciousness, of belief in action and not mere contemplation. And firmly I believe that this tendency is emphasized by the recent disaster that killed half a million people and devastated Tokyo and Yokohama. After introspection young Japan has started for



the life of action. Many young men will spring into action, much as the young men of Oxford and Cambridge rushed to the front. We shall have men and women who aspire to the type of St. Francis of Assisi, who has captivated so many young minds in Japan, and whose biographies written in Japanese have been much read these several years, not only because he was a pious friar, poet, and romantic enthusiast but also because faith and action were truly united in him.

Young Japan has had, and doubtless still has, many defects; but she has passed through a great tribulation, and ought to rise from her ashes with the determination "eternally to DO."

### Literary Influences in the Christianizing of Young Japan

As this short survey may have suggested, young Japan is eagerly groping after Truth, and makes much of life-experience, referred to as *Erleben* after German philosophers. Her best mind is like that of Hamlet, who can, though often fluctuating, believe that there is a divinity that shapes our ends and in that belief can jump into the jaws of death. It is, therefore, reasonable enough that Dostoyevsky should be highly esteemed among intellectuals. In spite of the results of the Russo-Japanese War, one may say Russian novelists have conquered young Japan. And though there is surely a gap between the Evangelical and the Tolstoian doctrines of Christianity, one cannot deny the Christian spirit in this Russian writer, not to mention that of the author of "The Brothers Karamazoff." Young Japan has become in a sense Christianized by these writers. She may not be a member of any sect, but she has been initiated into the Christian atmosphere.

Though English literature was rather neglected by young intellectuals in the period of naturalism, there seems to be a new tendency toward appreciation of English poets like Milton, Shelley, Keats, and Browning. These poets, including even Keats, are looked upon as humanitarian leaders. And English readers will be interested to learn that the translation of "Paradise Lost" is intended by various writers, while a great many well-known poems by Browning have been rendered into Japanese.

Lastly, who are the Christian leaders of those young men inclined to Christianity through either missionary or literary works? Mr. Masahisa Uemura, Presbyterian minister of Fujimicho

Church and editor of a weekly, the *Fukuin Shimpo* (Gospel News), Mr. Kanzo Uchimura, the well-known preacher and editor of a monthly, the *Seisho no Kenkyu* (Studies in the Bible), and Dr. Danjo Ebina, President of the Congregationalist University at Kyoto and sometime editor of a monthly, the *Shinjin* (New Man), may be mentioned as most influential Christian workers. It is a great pity, however, that their books and periodicals, sometimes keenly interesting, do not find so many readers among the general public as they properly should. Still there are some promising young Christians who, like Mr. Kagawa, have already made a phenomenal appearance before the reading public, or like Mr. Tokutaro Takakura are appealing to intellectuals by means of writings and sermons.

When one thinks of Japanese Christian literature one cannot but regret that there is little that is at once daily bread for the people and literature of real value. But Rome was not built in a day, and we must hope for the time when we shall get a Milton, a Bunyan, or a Dostoyevsky as our elders got the wonderful Japanese translation of the Book of Isaiah and the Psalms, which are in some sense comparable to the Authorized Version of 1611.

## The Reading of the Japanese Woman Student

By MICHU KAWAI

NUMEROUS answers to the questionnaires sent out to girl-students on their reading reveal that there is no special choice or restraint along this line. Absolutely free choice is left to them and there is a danger of careless, aimless perusal detrimental to any constructive thinking. The range of reading is naturally very wide. Certain special ideas or ideals do, however, dominate student thinking in Japan to-day. At least we may say that social-religious writing whether in novels or in essays, has a tremendous influence upon the reading class. By social-religious writing I mean anything in which man or woman, capital or labour, nationalism or inter-nationalism is conjoined with a religious element.

### An Intellectual Dilemma

Since the earthquake of last September we can trace two dis-



inct thoughts ruling our society. One is materialistic to the extreme: "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die" is their slogan. The other is the spiritual side: "Man shall not live by bread alone" is their motto. Our women students in general stand between these two streams like Longfellow's maidens, and they are puzzled which course they would choose. They are therefore interested greatly in materialism but that alone is not satisfying. The spiritual side seems to smother their freedom; yet they cannot forsake it absolutely. They love to mix Karl Marx and St. Augustine, John Stuart Mill and Dante. Thus the range of their reading is very wide, but it is a mixture of different authors. I do not deplore the present condition at all. It shows that there is a deep longing on the part of the student class to find truth at any cost. Students hate all restraint, not because they are wilful and selfish but because they believe in freedom of expression in words and in action. They are drawn to socialism, because they see the one-sidedness of the social structure and wish to share happiness and well-being with every class of society. They are glad when they find kinship in the thought of writers who reject the mouldy social conventions and rebel against all artificial restrictions to their daily life. In other words it seems now that this tendency of rebellion and of revolution is very strongly felt in the works of the popular writers and the students find their spokesmen there.

### An Introduction to the More Popular Japanese Writers

This is why the productions of Kagawa, Nishida, Arishima, Kurata, Mushakoji, G. Yoshida, J. Abé, S. Yanagi are read side by side with the books of Harry Ward, Wundt, Tolstoy, Turgenieff, Maeterlinck, Kant, and even Plato and Socrates. Let me introduce briefly the Japanese authors I have named. Kagawa is a Christian socialist. He is a writer, lecturer, and preacher. Wherever he speaks he has a large audience. His writings are welcomed everywhere. Perhaps he is the most popular young leader of the day. Nishida is a man nearly fifty years old and although he is not a Christian he is called the St. Francis of Japan. He has a monastery-like place of his own called "One-Light Garden." The name "One Light" was given to him by a Christian teacher who died some years ago. There at this mon-

astery he gathers his devotees who try to give up worldly possessions in order to do service to humanity without any compensation. As to his religion he himself cannot tell what it is. To him "The Light" is his god and his revelation. He does much manual labour, such as cleaning gutters and carrying garbage, always wearing a certain kind of dark simple gown. Although his popularity is waning now, still he has many followers and his books, which are collections of lectures in which the Bible and Buddhistic sacred books are freely quoted, are much sought after. Arishima was an idealist. In the early days he had the Christian faith but in his latter days he lost it and believed in fatalism. His writings are full of pathos; and his delicate sympathy toward the weak and the oppressed, his love of beauty in nature and in art, his daring action in handing over his large inherited property to his tenants, and other facts connected with his life, saddened by the loss of his beautiful wife after a few years of happy marriage, all these things combined attracted young people and he became their idol. Last summer he and a young woman committed suicide and that very act added to his popularity. Even to-day his books have a very wide circulation. Although he forsook his Christian faith he still possessed certain Christian ideals and therefore there was something beautiful and uplifting in his writing even though he wrote vulgar things. That is one of the reasons, I suppose, that the student class was greatly drawn to him. Kurata is a non-Christian writer who tries to give Buddhism all the Christian expression of love. He depicts love between man and woman as the highest expression of the human soul, but he lacks the consecrative and sacramental element of love, which fact makes his gospel of love exceedingly dangerous. Mushakoji was the founder of a community-life in the South. He writes stories with many Christian references. Even "Jesus" came from his pen, but neither faith in Him nor serious literary attempt. His writing is too weak and too lifeless for profound scholars, but is attractive to young people. He practises what he teaches in free love and naturally his home-life is no example to his admirers. Genjiro Yoshida is a Christian professor. His writings are like the early young leaves in the spring, fresh and full of potentiality. Jiro Abé is a professor of law in the Northern Imperial University. His ethics and philosophy are a good tonic



to the flabby mind. It is a salutary sign that his books and articles are rapidly being recognized and appreciated by the student class. Soetsu Yanagi, a professor of philosophy in several colleges, emphasizes the mystic and subjective side of religion. There are many women students who are his devotees and who enjoy Christianity simply as philosophy, just as a recluse alone in his cell finds enjoyment in a piece of an old manuscript. To them, the practical and objective side of Christianity appears shallow and vulgar and consequently the organized Church and Christian fellowship become distasteful.

### Christianity and Buddhism Invade Secular Literature

To-day our Government schools and colleges do not forbid Christianity to students as they did in former days, but they either ignore it or tolerate it as one of the phenomena of the day. For the latter reason it is very popular for non-Christian writers to quote or misquote freely from the Bible, and even the incidents of Christ's life are boldly used as the background of their stories and the weapons of their unbalanced arguments. Together with Christianity, Buddhism is also being gradually launched into secular literature. Several books on the life of Shinran, founder of the Shin sect of Buddhism in Japan, have been recently published and "The Priest and His Disciples" is a drama of the saint. It was written by M. Kurata, to whose literary productions women students are blind votareesses. In reading this book one cannot help discovering that the author has made a Buddhistic garment out of Christian cloth. Papini's "Life of Christ" has two translations in Japanese, and they go like wildfire. I doubt very much whether the student class welcomes this book from the same motive which prompted Papini to write it. Do they not welcome it with the same attitude of mind with which they welcome the drama of Shinran?

### Contrasting Elements

Here we have a peculiar phenomenon. On the one hand are the æsthetic, dramatic, mystic elements always attractive to our young women, and on the other, liberty, freedom, equality are their watchwords.

In some things, they love to express their simple ideas in just

as difficult and round-about a way as possible. They do not like to call a cat, cat, but love to apply to it some æsthetic term. And yet, in literature they prefer naturalism to romanticism. They side with socialists who throw away all shackles that bind individuals and society. Of all the well-known magazines, two edited by socialists are most popular among students of both sexes. With this tendency, they are again drawn to constructive Christianity. Here K. Uchimura, the author of "How I Became a Christian," and his prominent "disciples" still hold the leadership of Christian thinking through their Bible study. Kant's gospel of international peace and brotherhood warm the hearts of the young generation.

All this means that our students are looking forward consciously or unconsciously to the days of a new social order. After all they are seeking truth, and truth alone will make them free. Until they know that truth is Jesus Christ they will wander from one thought to another and this very wandering I call a sign of progress. Our great prayer is that many strong Christian writers will come forward to lead the young people to the Way, the Truth, and the Life.



# Les Livres dont l'Influence est la plus Considérable dans les Milieux Universitaires de France

By PIERRE MAURY

*(Abstract:* "The typical Catholic student, pre-occupied with moral and religious questions, often finds his needs best served by the literature of imagination." The writers who appeal to him are poets like Claudel or Péguy, "both of whom have sought to draw from their Catholic faith nutriment for their entire art." In the strictly religious realm there has been, on the one hand, a notable revival of the scholastic philosophy of St. Thomas, and on the other, an increasing admiration for a philosophy more or less suspected of modernism, represented by such works as "L'Action," by Blondel, and "L'Idéalisme grec et le Réalisme chrétien," by Père Laberthonnière. As concerns Catholic literature of edification, such books may be cited as the admirable "Letters of Père Didon," the "Letters of the Abbé Perreyve," Père Gratry's classic work "The Sources," the "Journal of Elisabeth Leseur," René Bazin's "Life of Père de Foucauld," the Catholic apostle in North Africa, and Abbé Klein's recently published biography of "Madeleine Sémer." The moral and ethical realm is represented by the splendid works of the recently deceased Catholic sociologist, Paul Bureau.

Within the more restricted circle of the French Student Christian Movement works much read in addition to those already cited are the writings of Gaston Frommel dealing with the philosophy of religion, Mr. Henri Bois's addresses and pamphlets on religious and devotional themes, Pastor Fallot's writings on social problems, translations of Harry Emerson Fosdick's and Rauschenbusch's books, Professor Dartigue's "Qu'est-ce que penser sa foi," and Mr. Boutier's "La Prière efficace," and biographies like that of Renée de Benoît and that of the Sadhu Sundar Singh.)

IL faut d'abord signaler que si partout l'étudiant, comparé aux membres des autres classes sociales, est un individualiste, l'étudiant Français l'est peut-être davantage qu'aucun autre. Il choisit ses lectures d'après ses idées personnelles, et s'il demande souvent des conseils pour cette sélection, il n'est pas sûr qu'il les observe toujours. Il faut dire aussi que la vie moderne semble peu favorable à la lecture et que souvent le jeune homme qui écoute volontiers une conférence, qui participe à un cercle d'études, fait plus difficilement l'effort d'une lecture personnelle de longue haleine. La multiplicité des journaux et des revues est, à cet égard, très fâcheuse.

## L'Evolution des Tendances très Rapide

Il convient également de relever que l'évolution des tendances intellectuelles et spirituelles est extrêmement rapide; la courbe du mouvement des idées s'infléchit très rapidement. A titre d'exemple

on pourrait signaler que la philosophie de Bergson qui jouissait avant la guerre d'un immense crédit, retient moins impérieusement la pensée des jeunes actuellement. Dans l'ordre purement religieux, notons que les ouvrages d'apologétique, qui jouissaient d'une grande faveur au temps où j'étais étudiant, susciteraient présentement un bien moindre intérêt. Les tendances ont changé : ce ne sont plus surtout des difficultés intellectuelles qui barrent la route de la foi, plutôt des objections d'ordre moral (théoriques ou pratiques).

### Les Oppositions confessionnelles

Enfin, et c'est la remarque la plus importante en ce qui concerne la France, les oppositions confessionnelles très marquées entre protestants et catholiques se retrouvent malheureusement dans la choix des lectures religieuses des étudiants. Un jeune catholique ignore à peu près tout de la littérature protestante ; l'inverse est peut-être un peu moins vrai, mais il l'est encore beaucoup trop, si l'on considère les fâcheux résultats de cette réciproque ignorance. Il faut cependant noter qu'à cet égard le travail de la Fédération contribue à corriger ce déplorable état de choses : Par nos cercles d'études, nos conférences, la bibliographie du *Semeur*, nous essayons d'élargir autant que possible l'horizon intellectuel et spirituel de nos camarades.

De ces quelques remarques il résulte que notre réponse à l'enquête du *Student World* garde forcément un caractère très partiel. Nos lecteurs voudront bien ne pas oublier les raisons que les étudiants Français ont de différer dans le choix de leurs livres de chevet et ils comprendront pourquoi nous avons divisé en deux catégories les livres qui nous paraissent être lus le plus largement et avec le plus grand profit moral et religieux ; les ouvrages pratiqués surtout par le plus grand nombre d'étudiants qui sont catholiques romains et sans contact profond avec notre Fédération, et ceux que les membres de nos associations méditent le plus volontiers.

### Les Lectures de l'Étudiant catholique

L'étudiant catholique moyen, préoccupé de questions morales et religieuses, trouvera souvent dans la littérature d'imagination un aliment à ses besoins. A cet égard le succès considérable des



œuvres d'un poète comme Claudel, ou comme Péguy, qui tous deux ont prétendu nourrir de leur foi catholique leur art tout entier, ont une signification spirituelle incontestable. Ce ne sont pas seulement de jeunes littérateurs qui ont été acheminés à la conversion par des influences de ce genre ; plus d'un étudiant pourrait témoigner de l'orientation religieuse que lui ont donnée des maîtres comme ceux-là.

S'il faut parler de livres plus techniquement religieux, pour ainsi dire, et si l'on aborde en particulier le domaine de la philosophie religieuse, on doit signaler que deux grandes tendances se manifestent dans la pensée catholique. D'une part, la philosophie scolastique de St.-Thomas connaît un renouveau remarquable. Cette popularité tient non seulement à la valeur de certains tenants modernes de cette philosophie, mais aussi au fait que l'Eglise a adopté la Somme du Docteur Angélique comme doctrine officielle, que celle-ci est professée dans la plupart des instituts catholiques, et que des organes aussi puissants que *La Revue des Jeunes* la répandent très largement.

D'autre part, une philosophie plus ou moins suspecte de modernisme compte encore de fervents admirateurs. S'il est difficile de se procurer des ouvrages comme "L'Action" de Blondel ou "L'Idéalisme grec et le Réalisme chrétien" du Père Laberthonnière —tous deux interdits explicitement par les autorités ecclésiastiques officielles—plusieurs étudiants de culture supérieure acceptent volontiers les thèses de "La Théorie de l'éducation" du même Père Laberthonnière, ou lisent avec profit dans *La Nouvelle Journée* les articles de Blondel, de l'Abbé Wehrlé, etc.

En ce qui concerne la littérature catholique d'édification, il nous semble que les ouvrages suivants sont ceux qui exercent la plus profonde influence : les admirable "Lettres du Père Didon," les "Lettres de l'Abbé Perreyve," surtout l'œuvre classique du Père Gratry "Les Sources" où se trouvent non seulement l'expression d'une très haute âme religieuse, mais aussi des conseils sur l'organisation et la discipline de la vie intellectuelle et spirituelle. Parmi les publications plus récentes le "Journal d'Elisabeth Leseur," "La vie du Père de Foucauld," l'apôtre catholique dans l'Afrique du Nord, par René Bazin, ou encore la biographie de "Madeleine Sémer" tout récemment publiée par l'Abbé Klein.

Si nous quittons le domaine purement religieux pour aborder la

question morale, nous n'avons pas à signaler, parmi les œuvres récentes qui exercent une large influence, de nombreux volumes. La vie morale est trop étroitement liée à la vie spirituelle pour que ce ne soit d'ailleurs que dans leur foi en Dieu et en Jésus-Christ que les étudiants cherchent l'inspiration de leur action. On peut cependant mentionner les beaux travaux de Paul Bureau, le sociologue catholique mort récemment: "La crise morale des temps nouveaux" paru peu avant la guerre et la remarquable étude: "L'indiscipline des mœurs," où la question sexuelle, envisagée sous son aspect social, est abordée de façon magistrale.

Parmi les ouvrages écrits par des penseurs qui ne se réclament d'aucune église particulière, mais que préoccupent les problèmes spirituels, il faudrait citer en première ligne le livre de Boutroux sur "Science et religion" qui a exercé une très large et profonde influence dans les milieux d'étudiants, autant que dans les cercles philosophiques.

### La Littérature connue et pratiquée dans la Fédération

Si nous en venons à la littérature connue et pratiquée dans un cercle plus restreint, celui de la Fédération, nous pouvons mentionner d'abord la plupart des œuvres que nous venons de citer, car si dans la littérature religieuse beaucoup de livres qui nous sont chers ne sont pas connus des étudiants qui ne sont pas en contact avec nos groupes, l'inverse n'est pas exact et nous faisons de gros efforts pour que la culture chrétienne des membres soit aussi vaste que possible.

Nous citerons donc, en ce qui concerne la philosophie religieuse les œuvres de deux penseurs auxquels nous devons beaucoup: Gaston Frommel, avec ses "Etudes littéraires et morales," "Etudes Morales et Religieuses," "Etudes Religieuses et Sociales," ses "Lettres intimes" et pour les théologiens, son cours apologétique "La vérité humaine." Dans tous ses ouvrages on retrouve non seulement la forte personnalité religieuse de l'auteur, dont les pages sur la vie intérieure sont parmi les plus belles qu'ait produit le protestantisme contemporain, mais encore le philosophe dont les théories de l'obligation morale, source de toutes connaissances, ont convaincu beaucoup de jeunes.

Mr Henri Bois, membre de notre Comité et orateur aimé de nos Congrès. Ses deux ouvrages sur "La Personne et l'Œuvre de

Jésus" et "La Valeur de l'Expérience Religieuse"; et ses brochures (sur "Le Problème du mal," "La prière d'intercession"; "Est-ce que des intellectuels peuvent être croyants?") sont parmi les livres les plus lus des étudiants.

Notons aussi les œuvres du pasteur Fallot "Le Christianisme Social," "L'Action Bonne" qui continuent d'exercer une durable influence.

Parmi les auteurs étrangers traduits en français les plus lus sont Fosdick et Rauschenbusch. Ils sont assez connus pour que nous n'ayons pas besoin de les caractériser.

Il faut aussi citer, parce qu'elles exercent une action assez vaste et profonde parmi les étudiants de la Fédération, les brochures que nous avons éditées, telles que "Qu'est-ce que penser sa foi?" de Mr Dartigue, vice-président de notre Fédération, "La Prière efficace" de Mr Boutier, une des plus remarquables études qui existent sur ce sujet, et les différents opuscules de Mr Bois que nous avons mentionnés plus haut.

Enfin des biographies comme celles de Renée de Benoît, du Sadou Sundar Singh, trouvent un grand nombre de lecteurs.

## Les Revues

Nous avons parlé en commençant des inconvénients que présentent les revues en empêchant la lecture véritable d'ouvrages de longue haleine. Toutefois il ne faut pas oublier que si elles présentent ce désavantage, elles ont par contre la qualité, étant très lues, d'apporter périodiquement un aliment intellectuel et spirituel aux étudiants. Il convient donc d'en citer quelques-unes : Comme revues catholiques : *La Revue des Jeunes* dirigée par des Dominicains selon une très stricte orthodoxie thomiste, mais largement informée au point de vue social. *La Nouvelle Journée* où écrivent plutôt des catholiques de gauche—si l'on peut ainsi dire—tant au point de vue dogmatique que social.\*

Parmi les revues protestantes *Foi et Vie*, dont l'ambition est d'être un instrument de culture chrétienne, et le *Christianisme Social*, consacré exclusivement aux problèmes que son titre indique. Enfin la revue de la Fédération, *Le Semeur*, qui s'efforce,

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\*Il faudrait, pour être complet, citer la revue jésuite des *Etudes* et *Les Lettres* consacrées au développement d'une littérature strictement catholique, et où des enquêtes intéressantes sur le problème de l'union des églises, le nationalisme ont paru ces temps derniers.



à côté de ses articles de consacrer une large part à la documentation intellectuelle, morale et sociale.

### **Les grandes Ouvrages de l'Histoire religieuse**

Nous n'avons parlé jusqu'ici que des ouvrages récents qui connaissent la faveur des étudiants. Il va sans dire que les grandes œuvres de l'histoire religieuse constituent toujours la nourriture spirituelle la plus efficace pour la plupart de nos jeunes contemporains: Le Saint-Augustin des "Confessions," "L'Imitation de Jésus-Christ," Saint-François d'Assise, les Réformateurs, Pascal, que le troisième centenaire de sa naissance, célébré l'année passée, a imposé à l'attention de tous, et pour beaucoup Bossuet ou Fénelon restent les meilleurs guides de nos recherches intellectuelles ou de nos besoins religieux.

### **Que cherche l'Etudiant Français dans ses Lectures?**

En conclusion de ce bien rapide et très incomplet exposé, nous voudrions seulement marquer ce que l'étudiant Français cherche dans ses lectures. Il nous semble que c'est beaucoup moins, à l'heure actuelle, une démonstration de la validité intellectuelle de sa foi, que la contagion d'une vie efficace, plus digne d'être vécue que celle où nous incite le spectacle d'une civilisation matérialiste. Il veut connaître Dieu et désire découvrir le secret de ceux pour qui Il a été la grande réalité. D'eux il espère dans son inquiète attente ou dans son laborieux effort vers une vie plus sainte l'enseignement des disciplines nécessaires et la promesse que son espérance sera récompensée.

## **Do British Students Read Serious Books?**

By DOROTHY STEVEN

THERE must have been times in the history of the Universities of Great Britain when the observer could take his pen in hand with perfect security and write "Such a leader of thought, or such a writer, is now predominant in his influence on the student mind: students are all reading Huxley, or Newman, or George Eliot. The results are incalculable." We are not, in 1924, in such a period.

### The Problem More Complex than a Generation Ago

Even such a statement, however, may be misleading. It is not that for this generation no outstanding leaders and teachers have arisen, no fields of speculation and thought been flung open. Einstein and the New Psychology are not so old, and Wireless is our latest enchantment. And in all our Universities and Colleges students are opening their minds to these new ideas, are thinking their way through to a fuller comprehension of the Universe and Life, are accepting the guidance of great writers as of great speakers or preachers. Only, the problem is infinitely more complex than it was a generation ago. The numbers of students have increased vastly all over these islands, and necessarily as University or College education has become more common, the student has become less and less marked off from the rest of the community as a being of exceptional intellectual attainments. It would require a movement of thought far more wide reaching to shake in its early stages this student generation in Britain than was required to stir to its depths the generation of our grandfathers. With the rest of the public, and perhaps hardly at all in advance of them, does the student mind become gradually permeated with the new ideas. The conscious striving is now on the part of the few.

This condition of affairs makes all but impossible any general statement on the question of what books students in Britain read and what writers exert the greatest influence. The most one can hope to convey is a personal impression gathered from the personal impressions rather than the sure knowledge of many students of different types.

### Direct Evidence to be Used with Caution

There is a further factor that makes the task even more difficult. Letters have come to me from our great non-residential Universities which plainly indicate that students as a whole read practically no serious books, and no periodicals more weighty than *Punch*. Such evidence must be used with caution. It is not easy for any one student at such a University to trace the books that his neighbours at the bench or in the classroom or the men he drinks coffee with in the Union, are reading in their leisure hours. They

do not read seriously under the public eye. It is only when he knows his fellow-student well enough to discuss serious matters, or when he can drop in on him in his lodgings at the week-end that he realizes his reading is not confined to *The Times* or *The Tatler* or the textbook necessary for his examination. The student at the residential College is in another case. I think of the one women's College I know best and of the casual people who visited one in the evenings, people of all shades of opinion and stages of mental development, and how they scanned the bookshelves and carried off anything from Masfield's latest poem to Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism*. One could have spoken with some degree of certitude of the books read in such a college.

### A Change since the War

Now in spite of these difficulties of judging in this matter, our experience in the Student Christian Movement during the last few years has shown that the students who have entered our colleges since the War have been less given to speculation and to questionings, less interested in problems of life and the world than their immediate predecessors. This seems naturally enough to be borne out by the accounts given of their reading. On the whole they are less inclined to turn to serious books because more ready to take things for granted, less anxious for illumination and solution of problems.

When we turn, however, to estimate the serious reading of the present generation of students there seem to be three general statements which it is reasonable to make.

### The Bulk of Reading Connected with Work

In the first place, far the greater bulk of serious books are read in the direct line of the students' own work, or as a natural development from their particular courses of study. So among those studying Philosophy or Education or Political Economy we find some familiarity with the works of Bosanquet and Bergson, Benjamin Kidd and Graham Wallas; while students of Psychology or Education or Medicine have frequently read more widely in the New Psychology, and especially in its bearing on their own subject, than their course of study renders compulsory. Science students, too, make excursions into the writings of Sir Oliver



Lodge, Professor J. Arthur Thomson, and others. Even here, however, it would be difficult to point to one book or author whose influence was predominant. Rather it seems to be the general tendency of the sum of writing and lecturing and talking on these subjects that turns their thoughts in one direction or another.

### Books of Imagination

But when they are not actually reading along the lines of their own professional or faculty interest, what do students read? Not, I think, only the lighter periodicals that are shown about the Union lounge or smoke-room. Life is very crowded at our modern Universities, and lived constantly in a rush and there are times when the student demands relaxation and a complete change of thought. It is at these times that many turn to books of imagination—to fiction of greater or less merit, the drama, poetry. Universities and colleges differ from one another in this respect, but it would probably be easy to find in most of them a number of people whose chosen favourites are Thomas Hardy, or H. G. Wells, Galsworthy, or Masfield, while everywhere apparently anthologies of modern verse are very popular. The other day, in one of our chief medical schools, a group of students were discussing subjects for future study circles in the Christian Union. "We want something about Religion and Poetry," they said unanimously. "The Christian Union ought to provide us with a change: we have no room in our medical course for all these other sides of life." This illustrates what is apparently a common phenomenon.

### Religious Books

When we come to religious books it is possible to be a little more definite. Letters from various colleges reveal a fairly large number of books and of authors. They reveal also the interesting fact that by far the greater number of religious books read by students are publications of the Student Christian Movement, and that in most cases (I might almost say in all cases), it is the presence of a Christian Union in college that stimulates this reading and it is among its members that steady reading is most common. It is quite safe in this connection to point to the writings

of Dr. Glover, of Dr. Fosdick, and of Dr. Herbert Gray as having most clearly influenced the colleges of Britain in the last few years. I do not say that the entire student generation has been gripped by them: but thousands of students, our own members first of all and through them many others, have read and are reading these books and owe a great debt of gratitude to their writers.

Next to these names stand those of Miss Maude Royden, Mr. Studdert Kennedy, Canon E. S. Woods, Bishop Temple, and others. The list is a long one but the influence of any one of these writers is probably much less than that of those first named.

### **The Special Responsibility of Secretaries**

It may be permissible to complete what has already been stated to be a personal impression, by expressing a conviction which continued work in the field has strengthened in one secretary in one of our Movements. It is very clear that a national Student Movement has in a wisely-growing Publications Department one of its strongest weapons. In our own country to-day, it is the use we make of our own publications that is determining very largely the religious reading of the British student. The fault is therefore the more seriously ours if we do not use them enough. The General Secretary says some year at Swanwick, "Every one ought to read such a book." Within a year that book has been carried into every college in the country, has been read by thousands of students. A travelling secretary descends on a district with one book, or perhaps two books and talks about them wherever he goes. Every one he talks to remembers and reads them. If he carries six or a dozen books people are confused and forget them all in their effort to remember which one to read first.

We cannot leave this responsibility to the one or two secretaries who have read most widely. All of us who are officers, however humble, of any Movement, know one book of real worth, and all of us have the chance of talking about it to many students. In this way we can all hand on the torch of the knowledge of God. For the spoken word can reach only a few, but who can set a limit to the influence of the written page?

# The Anti-Christian Movement of 1922 and Chinese Student Thought

By P. C. Hsü

WHEN the so-called Anti-Christian Movement broke out shortly before the Federation Conference in Peking in the spring of 1922, the writer predicted that the Movement, hostile as it might seem, would exercise a very healthy influence: for Christianity had hitherto been looked upon as a foreign religion and thus ignored by the students of the land, and this situation was now entirely altered by the interest which the Movement aroused both among Christians and among non-Christians. The events that have taken place during the two intervening years seem to bear out this prediction. That there is among Chinese students a considerable interest in religious and ethical subjects in general, and in Christianity in particular, can be readily seen in their publications. The Young China Society, for instance, published three special numbers on religion. In addition to the introduction of views about the subject expressed by Western thinkers such as William James, Höffding, Bertrand Russell, and others, eminent Chinese thinkers, both non-Christian and Christian, were asked to contribute articles for these special numbers. Then again the *Pioneer*, a bi-weekly, was partly devoted to the attack on Christianity. Discussions that have a bearing upon religion may nowadays be found in any periodical that one may chance to pick up. Even the so-called "controversy between science and metaphysics," which lasted nearly the whole of 1923, must be regarded as a manifestation of the same general tendency.

## Grounds of Opposition to Christianity

A first-hand study of views of those who oppose Christianity is almost imperative. They are indeed most varied, but they may be classified under the following heads:

1. Christianity is a tool in the hands of militaristic nations and capitalists.
2. Christian belief is unscientific and pathological, and its missionary propaganda essentially injurious.



3. Those influenced by thinkers such as Bertrand Russell maintain that religion is a hindrance to our search after truth. The belief in the supernatural is an illusion, which is incompatible with the scientific attitude. Religious dogmas allow no room for freedom of thought, and religious institutions always tend to preserve the old social order. Religion suppresses the development of individuality, and thus has an injurious effect upon morality. In short, the whole sin committed by religion is that it substitutes subjective emotions for objective data. The so-called spiritual comfort derived from religion is nothing more nor less than the satisfaction gained from opium smoking. Real spiritual satisfaction lies in the liberation of self, which can come only through endeavour.

### **A Summary of Anti-Religious Views**

The divergent views against religion have been ably summed up by one writer as follows:

- "1. Religious belief is hypothetical, illusive, mystical, unscientific, and dogmatic. It is a hindrance to human progress.
- "2. Religious experience is subjective, unreal, pathological, and superstitious. It magnifies emotion, and by minimizing the rôle of reason it produces an unsatisfactory view of life.
- "3. Religious institutions are monarchical, monopolistic, self-exclusive, and conservative. They hamper the development of our individuality, and foster mutual ill-feeling, if not hatred.
- "4. The moral teachings of different religions are slavish, self-deceiving, mean, and cruel. Their effects are positively injurious to human nature.
- "5. Religion has had its day. It has no permanent value for, and no place in, human life. Moreover it has in the past upheld the powerful and the rich, and has oppressed the poor.
- "6. As substitutes for religion, Æsthetics, Science, Ethics are among other things strongly advocated."

There are also, of course, many thinkers and scholars, both Christian and non-Christian, who uphold religion. Even when the Anti-Christian Movement was at its height, a number of non-Christian professors of the National University came out boldly with a strong plea for tolerance and mutual understanding. It is specially important, however, to know thoroughly what the opponent has to say and to know how to meet it. We should

indeed welcome his suggestions and criticisms, especially if they are reasonable and constructive. The enemy of truth is after all not criticism, or opposition, but indifference.

### **A Matchless Opportunity for Christian Literary Work**

As some of us see it, the present situation offers an unprecedented opportunity for Christian thinkers as well as an unmistakable challenge to them, to state their belief in such a way as will be acceptable to those who are imbued with the spirit of modern science. Whether the Christians in China can cope with the situation or not remains to be seen.

### **The Controversy between Metaphysics and Science**

The so-called controversy of 1923 between metaphysics and science is merely another manifestation of the same general interest. Mr. C. M. Chang, the official interpreter of Hans Driesch when the latter was in China, studied under Bergson and Eucken. In February, 1923, he delivered a lecture at the Tsing Hua college in Peking, entitled "Philosophy of Life." He says in part:

"Science alone cannot solve the problems of ethics, for science and life have entirely different characteristics. The former is objective, governed by logical principles, analytic, subject to the law of causality, and it owes its origin to the uniformity of the course of nature. In contrast to science, life is subjective, intuitive, synthetic, having free will, and its origin is rather to be sought in the individuality of personality. For this reason, the cardinal problems of life do not lend themselves to uniform standards of judgment, and opposing theories or beliefs will always have their place. People's views are bound to be different, and as long as there can be no fixed objective standard for life, each of us will have to seek for its solution within himself."

This lecture, innocent as it may seem, at once aroused bitter attacks from scholars who suspect anything that may resemble mediæval scholasticism. Mr. Ting, who first raised his voice in opposition to Mr. Chang, says in part:

"The fact that science has not been able to work out any uniform objective standard for the solution of problems of life so far does not mean it never will in the future. In fact, one reason why such a standard has not yet been established is to be found in the existence of those strange creatures we call metaphysicians! All mental phenomena are the lawful subject-matter of science, and

consequently science has the right to exercise strict censorship over all concepts and inferences. The so-called intuitive faculty is nothing more than 'suggestion gushing forth in life which has its origin in past experience.' The spirit of science is nothing but a sincere desire to seek truth and a systematic way of studying facts which lead to truth. Surely nothing has more contribution to make towards the enrichment of life than this."

The controversy thus begun lasted nearly a year, and many noted scholars participated in the discussion. Though the controversy ended without victory or defeat for either party, yet the majority of writers seem to be unwilling to give metaphysics its due. So the temper of this group of thinkers is not only against religion, but against metaphysics as well. As a fair example of this line of thinking and also as a fitting conclusion of this article, the writer cannot do better than to quote from the significant philosophical creed of Professor Hu Shih of the National University, which was written as soon as the controversy was over:

"In this naturalistic universe, where both time and space are infinite, this two-handed creature which is called man, whose average height is five feet six inches and whose longest life does not exceed a hundred years, is truly infinitesimal. His life is ruled by the law of causation. All his activities are urged on by the relentless force of the natural struggle for existence, and his so-called freedom is indeed very limited."

So far Professor Hu entirely disagrees with Mr. Chang, but he goes on to say:

"In this universe, however, man has his proper place and value. He has invented instruments and has succeeded in creating some civilization. Not only has he subdued many animals; he has also investigated the operations of nature, and by formulating laws of nature, he has been able to control nature. The wisdom thus gained has also broadened his vision and heightened his imagination. He used to worship animals and fear gods and ghosts, but gradually he has freed himself from these primitive beliefs. Now he has come to understand that the immensity of space merely enriches his æsthetic appreciation of the universe; that the infinity of time actually helps to realize the difficulty undergone by his forefathers; that the laws of causation enable him to control nature, and teach him the importance of creating new causes in order to get new effects; and that even the idea of natural struggle may increase his sense of sympathy for his fellowmen. In short, in this naturalistic universe, there is beauty, poetry, moral responsibility, and opportunity for the free exercise of our 'creative intelligence.'"



# What Books Influence American Students?

By FRANCIS P. MILLER

It is well nigh impossible to give a satisfactory answer to the question, "What books and other publications are most influencing American student thought?" A fairly careful effort has been made to secure accurate information from fifty or sixty competent people in different parts of the country and representing a variety of institutions, but the replies do not afford sufficient evidence to allow one to speak conclusively about the wide influence of any one book. The best one can do is to indicate in a general way some of the prevailing tastes in reading as illustrated by this or that volume.

Furthermore no answer can be given except one which concerns a minority of students, as it seems probable that the majority do very little serious reading apart from their curricula requirements. This is generally regarded as one of the most reprehensible defects in our university life. It is necessary to remember, however, that since the proportion of men and women in the universities is very much higher in this country than in Western Europe the fact that many students do little or no reading on their own account does not necessarily mean that the number of those who do read is relatively less.

## Environment Unfriendly to Cultivation of Literary Habits

It is perfectly true, however, that it is vastly more difficult to form regular habits of reading in an American university than in England or on the Continent. One can readily appreciate the difficulty of fostering a quiet scholastic atmosphere—apart from which a taste for books is rarely acquired—in institutions whose energies have so far been necessarily expended upon providing facilities for the enormous increase in enrollment. The mere task of assimilation has absorbed all their attention and resources. This largely accounts for the absurdly over-organized character of student life with its consequent distractions and discouragement of independent thinking. Students who possess higher natural endowments have undoubtedly suffered in this process. They have, for the time being, partly forfeited some of the values pecul-

lar to a more exclusive system for what is conceived to be the larger value of an equal opportunity for all to have a university education.

### **Extra-Curriculum Reading on the Increase**

In spite of an environment unfriendly to such interests, it is evident, however, that a growing number of students manage to achieve a fair amount of extra-curriculum reading. There are several books which appear to have been read during the past two or three years by at least a few people in every section of the country and which have undoubtedly exerted a considerable influence upon student thinking generally. James Harvey Robinson's "The Mind in the Making" would probably head this list, to be followed by H. G. Wells's "Outline of History," Papini's "Life of Christ," "The Life and Letters of Walter Hines Page," Ludwig Lewisohn's "Up-Stream," J. M. Keynes's "Economic Consequences of the Peace," and J. A. Thomson's "Outline of Science." A similar list of novels would include Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street" and "Babbitt"; A. S. M. Hutchinson's "If Winter Comes" and "This Freedom"; and more recently Percy Marks's "The Plastic Age," which deals specifically with college life.

### **Extensive Circulation of Religious or Ethical Books**

The circulation of distinctly religious books or books with a religious or ethical bias is naturally limited to a more clearly defined group of students. As far as sales are concerned, however, the "best sellers" even among novels are put to it to compete with the "best sellers" in this field. I am told, for instance, that more than 125,000 copies of Kirby Page's study of "War; Its Causes, Consequences, and Cure" have been disposed of. Only a fraction of these, of course, have gone to students, but its circulation among the colleges has been very large indeed. In the literature of devotion and religious teaching, the writings of Dr. Fosdick occupy a pre-eminent place. "The Meaning of Service" and "Christianity and Progress" are most frequently mentioned. T. R. Glover's "Jesus of History" and "Jesus in the Experience of Men" continue to exert considerable influence. During the past year no other book has made such a profound impression on the membership of our men's Associations as Herbert Gray's

"Men, Women, and God." It is felt to be the most helpful book of its kind that we have ever had. One student is reported to have circulated seven copies among two hundred acquaintances during the term, and a Western university is using it as a textbook in the Department of Physiology! Professor Ellwood's "Reconstruction of Religion" has also received wide recognition.

### Interest in Reading the Bible Reviving

It is noteworthy that interest in reading the Bible is reviving. This interest is more widespread in fact than at any time since before the War, with the additional value of being both more genuine and more intelligent. It is due in part to the influence of Mr. Bruce Curry. Several colleges (two of them state universities) reported that the students considered the Bible to have more influence still than any other book! One college also reported that "Pilgrim's Progress" had re-appeared—all because Studdert Kennedy quoted it at the Indianapolis Convention. Which goes to prove that the one sure way of guaranteeing the perusal of a book by students in this part of the world is to have it recommended by a speaker who wins their confidence and esteem.

What has been said thus far applies to a distinct majority of our student population. The great mass of undergraduates regard extra-curriculum reading not as a part of their education but as a diversion—a means of escape from and compensation for their required work or the hectic campus life in which they are immersed. The more trivial and frivolous the literature the more satisfying it will be. Hence the large consumption of Hutchinson's sentimental and respectable novels, and the even larger consumption of a varied assortment of other less respectable novels capitalizing the general interest in pseudo-Freudianism, and making a direct appeal to the beast in us under a thin veil of pretended realism. F. Scott Fitzgerald seems to be the waning spirit among those who have insured their own prosperity by prostituting the novel in this fashion.

### A Vast Amount of Magazine Reading

There is also a vast amount of magazine reading. *The Saturday Evening Post* is the one universal weekly. It probably does



neither good nor harm apart from consuming an endless amount of time. *The Intercollegian* of the Student Young Men's Christian Association has the largest subscription list of all the intercollegiate journals in the country. There are also several periodicals which cater to this or that variety of "students in revolt."

### **An Honest Intent to Probe the Meaning of Life**

Listing books as I have done above is most unsatisfactory. In the first place it is not a list to fill one with any special pride, and further such a list will be meaningless to those who are not acquainted with both the books and the country. About all one can do is to point out that taken as a whole these titles indicate a taste for realism interpreted on the one hand in terms of knowing life as it is (including the worst there is to know about it), and on the other in terms of discovering through this knowledge some sort of key to its meaning. They reflect in some measure an honest desire to see life clearly and to understand the significance of one's relation to it. The popularity of "The Plastic Age" illustrates one aspect of this zeal for self-examination and campus-analysis. It occupies common ground in that respect at least with "The Mind in the Making." The spirit that thrives on such as these and on Wells is certainly not profoundly speculative or philosophical. To our Continental friends it will seem very superficial. But its superficiality, if such it is, is due rather to the limited range of its interests and to lack of perspective than to any lack of honest intent to probe as deeply into the meaning of life as facts permit. And as for the "Outlines" one must remember that interest in them is not primarily due to any over-confidence in the scholarship which they exhibit but to the fact that they do represent an attempt to discover a clue to the meaning of the race's development.

### **A Spirit of Free Enquiry**

The growing spirit of eager and free enquiry indicated by the popularity of such writers as Professor Robinson is the most hopeful portent on the horizon. In spite of many eccentricities it does represent fundamentally a genuine desire to discover what is true. Such pessimism and cynicism as may occasionally appear is readily understood if one remembers what is in-

volved in this stupendous experiment of making university education available for a nation of more than a hundred million. The rapidity with which the system has had to be developed has necessitated a certain amount of temporary regimentation. An increasing number of students and professors are conscious of the importance of passing through this transitional period as soon as possible. There are signs that we have already begun to come through. Meanwhile the discontent of a few has fostered here and there a spirit of revolt. Wherever this represents a healthy re-action to repression and is accompanied by an honest desire to find a way out the results in the long run will be good. Unfortunately this good is jeopardized by the parasitic zeal of some to imitate certain aspects of the European Youth Movements when there are no conditions in our American life which would naturally produce similar characteristics without the application of artificial stimulation. It is obvious that as yet American students have little occasion for revolt, and where there is a pretense of this spirit its expression soon becomes doctrinaire and fantastical. The dominant note in this new spirit of enquiry, however, is fortunately not revolt, but discovery and achievement. Many might begin with James Harvey Robinson but few would end with Messrs. Mencken and Nathan. These latter gentlemen may satisfy the sophisticated senior's taste for clever iconoclasm, but their total influence is negligible. I am told that in one place even Tom Paine's "Age of Reason" has been resurrected again!

### **The Craving for "Human Interest" Material**

It will also be apparent from the general nature of most of the volumes listed how much the character of an American student's reading depends upon the extent to which books satisfy his craving for "human interest" material. This explains the enormous circulation of *The Saturday Evening Post*; also the popularity of Hutchinson's novels, and of "The Americanization of Edward Bok," and to a certain extent the influence of Fosdick and Glover, who at least have this much in common that they are primarily concerned with the humanity of Jesus. This is unquestionably the most effective religious approach at present. But at the same time it is the most precarious because it encourages a facile interpretation of religion in terms that can most easily be

understood rather than a fearful searching after the truth. When the popularity of this presentation indicates a greater interest in registering known experience than in discovering as yet unknown truth it is a very questionable asset indeed.

There are many signs of an approaching intellectual awakening in the universities, and we conceive it to be one of the major tasks of our student Association Movement to facilitate this through the encouragement of wiser and more methodical habits of reading.

## Einige merkwürdigen Schwankungen in der Lektüre der Studenten Deutschlands

By KARL HEIM

(*Abstract:* The welter and confusion of war-time thought gave place to a succession of somewhat clearly marked phases or tendencies in the reading of German students.

First there was the period of war-weariness: a wave of pacifism swept the student community. The favourite authors were Professor Förster, Leo Tolstoy, and Rabindranath Tagore.

Then came a student generation that demanded an opportunity to view as from a height "the entire world-situation and the meaning of the catastrophe from the standpoint of world-history." Its favourite writers were Oswald Spengler, author of "Der Untergang des Abendlandes" and other books; Theodor Lessing, who has written a book entitled "History as the Attribution of Meaning to the Meaningless"; and Hermann Keyserling, with his "Travel-Diary of a Philosopher."

"A generation fighting gallantly for its existence could not," however, "live permanently upon hardy scepticism as to the ultimate end and metaphysical background of all things." Consequently "the interest has turned again to reality," and the quest for reality is leading alike into the practical realms of politics and political economy and into the literature, as well, of occultism and anthroposophy. Memoirs of political and military leaders before and during the War, compete with Gamaschke, Henry George, Walter Rathenau, and a life of Henry Ford. The wisdom of the Far East, Buddha, Confucius, and Lâo-tsze, and the mystic books of the Middle Ages have been made accessible to the students of Germany and are eagerly sought. Ferdinand Ossendowski's "Beasts, Men, and Gods" combines the two predominant strains of interest for the present-day student of Germany, and is widely read. Dostoyevsky, as an explorer of "the human soul and its mystic backgrounds," has largely supplanted Tolstoy; and the Danish writer Kjerkegaard is "far more understood in Germany than in his homeland.")

Was ich in folgendem ausführe, beruht teils auf eigenen Beobachtungen in meinem studentischen Bekanntenkreis, teils auf dem, was die Sekretäre der Christlichen Studentenvereinigung bei ihrem Umgang mit Studenten feststellen konnten. Endlich haben wir an



einem Berliner Studentenkosttisch, in dem eine täglich wechselnde, bunt zusammengewürfelte Schar von Studenten verschiedener Fakultäten und Geistesrichtungen verkehrte, eine Stichprobe gemacht, indem wir während einer Reihe von Tagen eine Anzahl von Studenten baten, die Bücher aufzuschreiben, die sie in der letzten Zeit am meisten gefesselt haben.

### Geistige Erdbeben

Das Ueberraschendste bei diesen Erhebungen war mir, wie schnell in den letzten zehn Jahren die geistige Lage sich geändert hat. Wenn ein Erdbeben eine Landschaft erschüttert, so entstehen ja plötzlich starke Veränderungen der Bodenfläche. So haben wir in den letzten zehn Jahren in Deutschland erdbebenartige Schwankungen und Verschiebungen des Bodens erlebt, bei denen in rascher Folge das Pendel bald nach der einen, bald nach der anderen Seite ausschlug. Es gibt Gedanken, die wie unsichtbare Gewalten in der Luft liegen. Es gibt eine geistige Atmosphäre, deren Einfluss jeder fühlt, deren Macht er, ohne es zu wissen und zu wollen, unterliegt, und es gibt geistige Ereignisse, die diese Atmosphäre plötzlich verändern.

### Der Krieg auch ein geistiges Ereignis

Das Erlebnis des unglücklichen Kriegs war ja für die deutsche Studentenschaft nicht bloss ein politisches und wirtschaftliches Ereignis. Nein, es war auch ein geistiges Ereignis, eine seelische Katastrophe. Viele, die wohlbehalten von den Schlachtfeldern zurückgekehrt waren, sind seelisch an dem Erlebten zugrunde gegangen. Die andern sahen sich vor neue Probleme gestellt, die ganz anders waren, als die Fragen, mit denen sie sich früher beschäftigt hatten. So erklären sich die merkwürdig starken Schwankungen, die in der Lektüre der Studenten in den letzten zehn Jahren eingetreten sind. Ich möchte in folgendem die Wandlung kurz beschreiben, die wir in dieser Beziehung erlebt haben.

#### 1. Eine Welle des Pazifismus

In der Zeit unmittelbar nach dem Kriegsende waren die Hochschulen fast ganz von älteren Studenten bevölkert, die aus dem Schützengraben kamen und ihre feldgrauen Uniformen im Hör-

saal vollends verbrauchten. Sie standen unter dem starken Eindruck der Sinnlosigkeit des Völkermordens. Sie wollten nichts mehr von Kriegstaten hören. Sie wollten die schrecklichen Bilder vergessen, von denen sie verfolgt waren. In dieser Zeit ging eine Welle des Pazifismus durch die deutschen Universitäten. Der Pädagoge Friedrich Wilhelm Förster hat durch seine glänzend geschriebenen Bücher "Weltpolitik und Weltgewissen," "Politische Ethik," "Zur Beurteilung der deutschen Kriegsführung" den Gedanken in die Jugend hineingetragen: die Gewaltpolitik ist eine kurzsichtige Verkennung des Grundgesetzes, dass Gewalt immer nur Reaktionsgefühle auslöst, die seelischen Schaden anrichten; eine wahre und weitschauende Politik kann nur auf der Symbiose zwischen Menschen und Völkern beruhen. Im Zusammenhange mit Försters Einfluss erlebte auch das Evangelium Tolstois in der kriegsmüden Nachkriegsgeneration eine kurze Auferstehung mit seinem Grundgedanken: Widerstrebet nicht dem Uebel. Dazu kam ein indischer Prophet, der durch Deutschland zog, und dessen Romane eine Zeitlang die gelesensten Bücher in Deutschland waren, Rabindranath Tagore. Warum zog er so mächtig an? "Tagore ist eine Sehnsucht, politisch und menschlich eine lichte Ferne," so stand in der Frankfurter Zeitung, "sein Lehrhaus zwischen Delhi und Kalkutta heisst Shanti Niketan, d.h. Wohnung des Friedens. Die zerrissene Menschheit und der zerrissene Mensch brauchen die Botschaft des Inders. Welt und Menschen müssen die Einheit wiedergewinnen, wenn sie nicht in Hass und Haltlosigkeit versinken wollen. Tagore verkündigt das Freisein von allem Hader, von Unwissenheit und Begehren, von allem, was uns an die Materie bindet. Der indische Mensch ist ein in sich ruhendes Gleichmass, Einklang und Güte, ein Gefäss der Stille, in jedem Menschen ist Buddha." Mit dieser Botschaft einer allversöhnenden Menschenliebe kam Tagore zu dem geschlagenen deutschen Volk, das seit sieben Jahren von der Welt da draussen kein freundliches Wort zu hören bekommen hatte. Da ging das Gefühl durch Deutschland, als ob die Menschen dem ausgestossenen Bruder wieder die Bruderhand reichen wollten.

Diesem Verlangen nach dem Ende aller Gewalt kamen ausser den Romanen von Tagore auch die vielgelesenen Bücher von Lafcadio Hearn mit ihrem Idealbild des alten friedevollen Japan und Bonsels Indienfahrer entgegen.

## 2. Eine Generation des geschichtsphilosophischen Nachdenkens

Aber mit dem Verschwinden der alten Kriegsgeneration von den Universitäten ist auch Förster und Tolstoi wieder in den Hintergrund getreten. Es kam eine neue Studentengeneration herauf. Unter ihnen war keiner mehr, der verschüttet gewesen war, oder dessen Nerven- und Gedächtniskraft durch vier Kriegsjahre zerrüttet war. Diese Generation hatte bereits "historischen Abstand" von den Ereignissen. Bei ihr regte sich das starke Bedürfnis nach rückschauender Gesinnung über das Geschehene. Es erwachte das geschichtsphilosophische Nachdenken. In dieser Zeit erschien ein Buch, das über Deutschland hinging, wie eine Regenwolke über frisch gesätes Land und überall die Saat zum Wachsen brachte: Spenglers "Untergang des Abendlandes." Auch in den Fragebogen, die wir in Berlin auslegten, und in denen die am meisten gelesenen Bücher aufgeführt werden sollten, ist fast ausnahmslos Oswald Spengler genannt, nicht nur sein Hauptwerk: "Der Untergang des Abendlandes," sondern auch das andere Buch von ihm: "Preussentum und Sozialismus." Daneben stehen vielfach die damit verwandten Bücher: Theodor Lessing: "Die Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen" und Hermann Keyserling "Das Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen." Woher kam der gewaltige Einfluss, der von Spenglers Werk und den geistesverwandten Büchern ausging? Wie kam es, dass der erste Band von Spenglers Buch, der 640 Seiten stark ist, in einer Zeit, in der niemand Geld hatte, schon in 1½ Jahren in 22,000 Exemplaren verbreitet war, obwohl sehr früh die scharfe Kritik der Fachleute dagegen eingesetzt hatte? Das Buch gab dem durch das Elend der Gegenwart zerschlagenen Menschen gleichsam als Ersatz und Heilmittel eine hohe geistige Befriedigung, über der man die traurige Gegenwart beinahe vergessen konnte, nämlich eine historische Rundschau über das Ganze des Weltgeschehens, das in eine ganz neue, überraschende Beleuchtung trat. Es war die hohe Freude, die Weltgeschichte als *divina commedia* zu genießen. "Wir brauchen eine Geschichtschreibung faustischen Stils," sagt Spengler, "die Distanz genug besitzt, um im Gesamtbild der Weltgeschichte auch die Gegenwart, die es ja nur in Bezug auf eine einzige von unzähligen menschlichen Generationen ist,



wie etwas unendlich Fernes und Fremdes zu betrachten, als eine Epoche, die nicht schwerer wiegt, als alle anderen, ohne den Massstab irgend welcher Ideale, ohne Bezug auf sich selbst, ohne Wunsch, Sorge und persönliche innere Beteiligung, wie sie das praktische Leben in Anspruch nimmt; eine Distanz also, die—mit Nietzsche zu reden—es erlaubt, das ganze Phänomän der historischen Menschheit, wie mit dem Auge eines Gottes zu überblicken, wie die Gipfelreihe eines Gebirgs am Horizont, als ob man selbst gar nicht zu ihr gehörte." Ausser diesem rein geistigen Genuss gaben Spenglers Bücher einer Jugend, der der Krieg ihre alten Ideale zerschlagen hatte, ein neues, von allen Illusionen freies Lebensziel. Wir sind im Endstadium der abendländischen Zivilisation, sagt er ihr. Aber wir wollen ohne Idealogie in tapferer Skepsis die Aufgaben in Angriff nehmen, die unser Schicksal, im Zersetzungsstadium einer Kultur geboren zu sein, mit sich bringt. Mit anderen Worten: Wir sollen unserem Schicksal, dem Sozialismus, diesem Alterszustand der abendländischen Seele, nicht etwa als philosophierende Zuschauer gegenüber stehen, sondern ihn unter Einsatz unserer ganzen Tatkraft bejahren.

### 3. Das überwiegende Interesse der Gegenwart

Die Wirkungen, die von Spenglers Geschichtsphilosophie und dem geistig damit verwandten Reisetagebuch Keyserlings ausgingen, waren ausserordentlich nachhaltig. Aber merkwürdiger Weise hat auch die Hochflut dieser geschichtsphilosophischen Weltbetrachtungen in der Studentenschaft bereits wieder nachgelassen. Der Gedanke, dass wir im Herbst einer Kultur leben, und dass wir dieses Schicksal tapfer bejahren müssen, hatte, als er zum erstenmal ausgesprochen wurde, etwas faszinierendes gehabt. Aber ein hartes um seine Existenz ringendes Geschlecht konnte auf die Dauer nicht mehr leben von der tapferen Skepsis gegenüber dem Endziel und dem metaphysischen Hintergrund aller Dinge. Es brauchte, um arbeiten und mit der Not kämpfen zu können, einerseits ein konkretes, nationales Zukunftsziel, andererseits einen archimedischen Punkt jenseits der Geschichte, von dem aus man die Wirklichkeit ertragen und die Welt aus den Angeln heben konnte. Kaum war die ältere Generation von den Hochschulen abgegangen, die die Schrecken des Krieges noch voll

durchgekostet hatte und darum für pazifistische Gedanken empfänglich gewesen war, erwachte besonders unter dem Eindruck dessen, was im besetzten Gebiet geschah, eine neue nationale Bewegung auf. Das Interesse wandte sich wieder der Wirklichkeit und der Gegenwart zu, die man zunächst über geschichtsphilosophischen Studien beinahe vergessen hatte. Die Memoiren der politischen und militärischen Führer vor und während des Kriegs wurden wieder mit neuer Begeisterung gelesen. Die Briefe Friedrichs des Grossen, Bismarcks Gedanken und Erinnerungen, die Kriegserinnerungen von Tirpitz, von Ludendorff, die Memoiren des Kronprinzen, das Buch von Michaelis "Für Staat und Volk" werden immer wieder nicht nur von Nationalökonomien, sondern auch von Technikern, Medizinern und Theologen als ihre Lektüre genannt. Wieder finden wir politisch soziale Bücher auf dem Schreibtisch des Studenten, Damaschkes Bodenreform, Henry George "Fortschritt und Armut," Walter Rathenau "Die Kommenden Dinge," die Selbstbiographie des Amerikaners Henry Ford. Aber dieses neu erwachte Interesse am politischen und ökonomischen Machtkampf der Gegenwart geht merkwürdigerweise Hand in Hand mit einer Neigung, die scheinbar in eine ganz entgegengesetzte Richtung geht, nämlich einem Verlangen nach okkultistischer und anthroposophischer Literatur. Man greift wieder nach den Büchern, die die Weisheit des fernen Ostens enthalten, nach Buddha, Kungtse und Laotse, nach den mystischen Büchern des Mittelalters, die in schönen Ausgaben dem modernen Publikum zugänglich gemacht werden. Gruppen von Anhängern des Anthroposophen Rudolf Steiner bilden sich auf den Universitäten. Seit dem Krieg hat sich auch bei solchen, die früher materialistisch dachten, der Eindruck gesteigert, es sei unmöglich, ein befriedigendes Dasein zu finden, wenn diese Welt nicht einen übersinnlichen Hintergrund hat, von dem aus alles eine neue Bedeutung gewinnt.

Am stärksten ziehen darum diejenigen Bücher an, die beides miteinander vereinigen, eine Gegenwartsschilderung, die ohne jede Idealisierung in herbem Realismus und psychologisch eindringender Analyse die Wirklichkeit des Existenzkampfes und des Seelenlebens der heutigen Zeit darstellt, und den Sinn für das Mysterium jenseits der Seele. Seit Weihnachten 1923 ist eines der vielgelesenen Bücher das des russischen Offiziers Ossen-

dowski "Tiere, Menschen und Götter." Man hat das Buch "den modernen Robinson" genannt. Der erbarmungslose politische Gegenwartskampf zwischen dem Bolschewismus und der weissen Armee hebt sich in diesem Buch überaus wirkungsvoll ab von dem mystischen Hintergrund der Wunderwelt des Lama-Buddhismus mit seinen okkulten Kräften und überirdischen Zukunftsprophetien. Aber noch stärker wirkt schon seit längerer Zeit der grosse russische Darsteller der Menschenseele und ihrer mystischen Hintergründe, Dostojewski. Er ist fast der gelesenste Dichter in Deutschland. Fast alle Studenten, die wir gefragt haben, haben ihn auf dem Fragebogen mit an erster Stelle genannt. Dostojewski hat Tolstoi auf der ganzen Linie verdrängt. Neben ihm steht der Däne Kjerkegaard, der in Deutschland weit mehr verstanden worden ist, als in seiner Heimat.

"Wem durch die Kriegskatastrophe der Glaube an den Kulturmenschen zerbrochen ist, dem tritt in den Gestalten Dostojewskis das Rätsel des Menschen entgegen, das Dämonische in der Menschenseele, das auch unter der Oberfläche des scheinbar so wohlgeordneten Lebens schlummert. Wer aus den gesicherten Verhältnissen der Vorkriegszeit in die Welt Dostojewskis kommt, hat 'Urweltlandschaft' betreten" (Stefan Zweig). Aber das ist das Anziehende an Dostojewski—hinter dem "Ende des Menschen," hinter dem in sich unlösbaren Problem der Menschenseele, das den Gestalten Dostojewskis in den kranken und bleichen Gesichtern zu lesen steht, steht das unbegreifliche Siegeswort "Auferstehung." Gerade das Ende des Menschen ist bei Dostojewski in den Schlusszenen seiner grossen Romane der Anfang eines ganz neuen Unbeschreiblichen, die Morgenröte einer neuen Zukunft, die Auferstehung zu neuem Leben. Dieser gewaltige Kontrast zwischen der Ohnmacht und Eitelkeit aller Menschenwege und Menschenwerke auf der einen Seite und dem absolut jenseitigen Schaffen Gottes, ist das, was die jüngste Richtung in der Theologie (Barth, Turneysen, Gogarten) aufgenommen hat, um es in wirksamer Weise mit dem *sola fide* der Reformatoren in Verbindung zu setzen. Daher kommt es, dass diese Theologen der jüngsten Richtung auch ausserhalb des theologischen Kreises wie Propheten einer neuen Weltanschauung gelesen werden. Bezeichnend für die Vereinigung des politischen Wirklichkeitssinnes mit dem neu erwachten Interesse an der Gottesfrage ist



die Bücherliste, die ein Berliner Mediziner im 6. Semester neben seiner medizinischen Fachliteratur als seine Lieblingslektüre nennt: Georg Michaelis "Weltreisegedanken," Gogarten "Die religiöse Entscheidung," Kjerkegaard, Dostojewski, Althaus "Staatsgedanke und Reich Gottes," Oldenberg "Buddha," Gerlich "Der Kommunismus als Lehre vom Tausendjährigen Reich." Gerade die Vereinigung des Realpolitischen mit dem indischen Pessimismus und einer das Transzendente in paradoxer Weise darstellenden Theologie bei diesem jungen Arzt, kennzeichnet die Mischung der geistigen Bedürfnisse, die jetzt auf den deutschen Universitäten mit einander verbunden sind.

## Student Thought in Syria

By PHILIP K. HITT

THE outstanding feature of student life in Syria as lived to-day is its lack of conformity to any common standards and ideals. Strictly speaking there are as many systems of education as there are institutions of learning. Not only is there lack of standardization in the educational systems of Syria, but the student body itself is anything but homogeneous. Syria has been rightly characterized as a museum of races, nationalities, and religions, and this fact is reflected in its student body. Take a cross section through almost any good-sized class in the American University of Beirût and you are almost sure to find representatives of the following nationalities: Syrians, Palestinians, Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Persians, Armenians, and Greeks. Of a total enrollment of 934 students for the current year, 333 students in this University are Muslims, 67 Jews, 31 Druzes, 8 Baha'is, 1 Karaim, and the rest Christians of the following denominations: Greek Orthodox, Protestants, Gregorians, Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Copts, Maronites, Chaldeans, and Syriacs. In a little village in the neighbourhood of Beirût, whose population is mainly Druze, Greek Orthodox, and Maronite, the following new denominations have been established through recent missionary effort: Presbyterians, twenty individuals; Pentecostal League, seven; Baptists, six; Church of God, five; Sabbatarian Adventists, three; Church of England, one.

### **Scarcity of Institutions of Higher Grade**

Another difficulty in the way of having a more or less common stock of reading material arises from the fact that aside from the American University of Beirût, there are no colleges in Syria in the accepted Western sense of the term. Thus the student body is almost wholly made up of immature boys and girls pursuing what might be termed elementary and secondary education.

### **Little Reading outside of Regularly Prescribed Courses**

A survey of this heterogeneous and complex student body in Syria made for the purpose of collecting data for this article revealed the fact that in general the students of Syria do very little or no reading whatever outside of their regularly prescribed courses of study. This is exactly what is to be expected from students the majority of whom are doing secondary school work. Immaturity, lack of interest and time, straitened economic conditions, and the comparative inaccessibility of reading material—all conspire to produce the prevailing result.

### **Religious and Ethical Instruction in Mission Schools**

What then are the prescribed courses of ethical and religious nature which students take? In pre-war days, all the mission schools—Catholic and Protestant alike—required compulsory attendance on religious services and Bible or ethical classes. After the War, however, they found it expedient to give the students more leeway in this matter. In the American University of Beirût a non-Christian student is permitted, at the request of his parent, to attend what is called "the alternative exercise" instead of the daily morning chapel exercise. In the alternative exercise, topics of popular interest, other than religious, are discussed. Students in the Preparatory Schools and the School of Arts and Sciences are required to attend a Bible or ethical class two or three periods a week.

### **Prominence of the Koran**

In Greater Lebanon, according to a statement given me by the Director of Education, the government has 118 public schools with an enrollment amounting to 9,000 students of both sexes.

These schools are mostly frequented by Muslim students. In the primary grades the Koran is taught for one hour each day, but in the higher classes ethical studies are substituted. Every faithful Muslim is expected to memorize the Koran word by word. In fact in many of the schools connected with mosques, education consists chiefly in the study of this holy book.

### **Idealistic Appeals Have Lost Their Charm**

The moral effects of the War have been on the whole of the unwholesome kind. Students have tended, as a result of their war experiences, in the direction of scepticism and materialism. Idealistic appeals seem to have lost a great deal of their pre-war charm to them.

### **A Questionnaire on Student Reading**

In an attempt to ascertain from first-hand sources the nature of books mostly read by students and the extent of the influence exercised upon them by those books, a questionnaire was drawn and distributed among three hundred college students in Beirûl and an equal number of high school students in Syria and Lebanon. An average of only four per cent. answered, showing the students' lack of interest in this matter and the paucity of data they possess with regard to it. A study of these answers, coupled with a number of consultations with school principals, showed clearly that the students of Syria are not attracted by literature of a socialistic character. They are on the whole individualistic to a fault, and very few of them are socially minded. Besides, such literature is practically inaccessible to them.

### **Literary Influence Greater than the Religious**

On the other hand, it was made clear that the literary and linguistic influence exercised over the students' minds is much greater than the religious and moral influence of anything they read. They revel in literature, poetry or prose, which is rich in imagery and elegant in style. Their language, the Arabic, lends itself beautifully to such treatment. The melody of its rhythm, the music of its rhyme, the richness of its vocabulary, and the strength and charm of its expressions seem to have a greater



appeal to the æsthetic nature of these students than any message could have to their intellectual and moral nature. The imaginative and poetical writings of certain Arabic writers—in Cairo and, strange as it may seem, in New York—hold the highest place in their esteem. In fact this is exactly what is to be expected from such a people as the Muslims, whose main argument in favour of the inspirational character of the Koran has always been its *i'jaz*, i.e., its miraculous composition and unparalleled style.

### **The Bible and the Koran**

In the realm of religious literature, the Koran holds first place for the Muslim students and the Bible for the Christian students. Religious tracts, books, and periodicals that are up-to-date and designed to meet the peculiar needs of the students of Syria are practically unknown. Hence the concentration of the religiously minded students on the two holy books.

According to a report solicited from the secretary of the Sunday schools in Syria and Palestine, there are to-day enrolled in the Sunday schools of Syria 6,000 pupils, and of Palestine 2,000, the total enrollment including officers and teachers being 8,190. In Syria the book used in the preparation of the lessons is a translation of Tarbell's "Teachers' Guide." Other books have been used in different schools, such as translations of Marion Lawrence's "How to Conduct a Sunday School," Wells's "The Teacher Who Teaches," and Dubois's "The Point of Contact."

### **Publications Unsuitable to the Oriental Psychology**

In order to get at the facts from another angle, a visit was made to the American Mission Press at Beirût. According to information received from its publication manager, there were sold in the last six months 3,513 Bibles, or parts thereof, seventy per cent. of which were consumed by schools and students. A study of the publication lists of the Press made it clear that most of the religious books are translations from English originals which can hardly be said to meet the peculiar psychology and needs of Oriental students and while most of the sermons of Spurgeon and Moody have been translated, only one of such a modern writer as Harry Emerson Fosdick has been done into Arabic.

### Religious Periodicals

The American Mission publishes a weekly religious periodical, *An-Neshrah*, which in the past has not been much of a force in the religious life of the student body. Steps, however, are being taken to keep this publication more abreast with the development of modern religious thought and to enlarge its sphere of usefulness. Its monthly supplement, *'al-Mulhak*, has a circulation of fifteen hundred copies in the village Sunday schools.

The Catholic Press in Beirût also issues a monthly magazine and a daily paper, which, together with the American Press publications, form the only Christian periodicals of religious character in Syria.

### The Need of Colportage

The question of the distribution of tracts and books should be alluded to here. It has been well summed up in a letter from the British principal of a large day school in Lebanon: "Colportage work needs to be greatly developed in this country. Even in our out-of-the-way villages of England, there is often stagnation mentally, and the visit of a representative of the Christian Colportage Association creates a sensation and something to talk over for a week. There may be splendid books at the presses in Beirût, but until they are actually in the hands of the country folk and village students their work is not begun."

### "Very Little Persistent and Consistent Study"

In conclusion, and to sum up the discussion, let me make another quotation from a letter written by the principal of a high school: "The outstanding characteristic of student life in Syria is that very little persistent and consistent study is being done throughout the country. Students in the main study their textbooks and few of them are what we understand to be students, interested in keeping in touch with the progress of thought in the world as a whole. Even among our teachers and preachers few are maintaining an intelligent contact with the world of to-day through literature." The highest type of modern Christian statesmanship is required to grapple with this problem.

## Notes on Contributors

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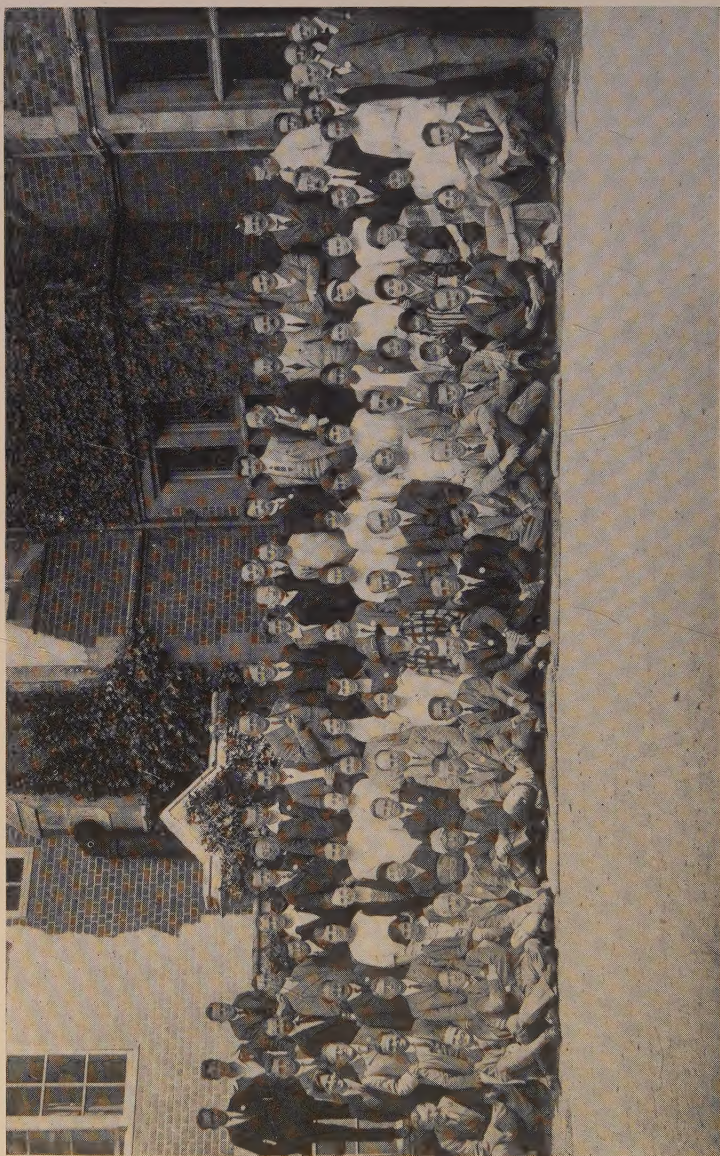
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